

Message Text

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ACTION COA-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GUAYAQUIL 0345

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, PLOS, PFOR, EC, US

SUBJ: SEIZED U.S. TUNA VESSELS: DISPOSITION OF CATCH ON BOARD

JACQUELINE A, A.K. STRON AND NEPTUNE

1. SUMMARY. MEETING HELD FEB 27 TO DETERMINE DISPOSITION OF CATCH ON BOARD JACQUELINE A, A.K. STRON AND NEPTUNE. IT NOT POSSIBLE TO LINK LICENSE FOR STROM WITH AGREEMENT OF OWNER TO PURCHASE CATCH ON BOARD. DECISION ON OFF-LOADING STROM AND NEPTUNE OR ORDERING OWNER TO PURCHASE CATCH TO BE GIVEN THIS AFTERNOON. IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUS AGREEMENT, JACQUELINE A. WILL PROCEED TO MANTA ON MARCH 3 TO OFF-LOAD CATCH. END SUMMARY.

2. FEB 27 NOON MEETING AT OFFICES OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FISHERIES ATTENDED BY: FISHERIES DIRECTOR, ARROYO; FISHERIES LEGAL ADVISOR, SANCHEZ; EPNA MANAGER, CHACON; NAVAL ZONE CHIEF OF STAFF, RUIZ; NAVY SUPPLY CORPS DIRECTOR, ZAVALA; ZAPATA REP, SOUSA; STARKIST REP, GLIGO; ZAPATA AND STARKIST AGENT, YULEE; ZAPATA AND STARKIST LAWYER, ZAPATIER; AND CONSUL GENERAL. ARROYO OPENED MEETING BY EXPLAINING THAT UNDER ECUADOREAN LAW AND REGULATIONS HE HAD TWO POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION CONCERNING FISH FOUND ON BOARD CAPTURED FISHING VESSELS: (A) ORDER THAT FISH BE OFF-LOADED OR (B) ORDER THAT BOAT OWNER PAY FOR FISH

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AND THEREBY RETAIN CATCH. AT THIS MOMENT THERE IS NO STORAGE

SPACE AVAILABE FOR FISH. ARROYO SAID HE HAD CALLED MEETING TO SOLICIT VIEWS OF BOAT OWNER REPS CONCERNING MOST DESIRABLE COURSE OF ACTION SO THAT HE COULD CONSIDER THEIR WISHES WHEN MAKING HIS FINAL DECISION. ARROYO SAID HE WOULD PROBABLY MAKE KNOWN HIS FINAL DECISION LATE AFTERNOON OF FEB 27.

3. CHACON STATED THAT ALL OFF-LOADING WOULD HAVE TO TAKE PLACE IN MANTA. HE SAID SPACE WOULD BE AVAILABLE MARCH 3 WHEN FREEZER SHIP "MOCHICA" EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETELY LOADED. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT MANTA COMPANY PROMASA WOULD STORE ALL CONFISCATED CATCH AND THAT IT HAD CAPACITY TO RECEIVE ONLY 50 TONS A DAY. OFF-LOADING WILL THEREFORE BE A SLOW PROCESS. (JACQUELINE A HAS 250 TONS; A.K. STROM, 300; AND NEPTUNE, 170).

4. ARROYO SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT PRICE COMPANY WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR FISH. NATIONAL PRICE VARIES AND DEPENDS ON FISH QUALITY AND SPECIES. HE WILL DECIDE PRICE IF HE ORDERS THAT FISH BE PURCHASED.

5. YULEE AND GLIGO STATED THAT THEY HAD NO INTEREST IN PURCHASING FISH ON NEPTUNE. THEY SAID THEY WERE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING A.K. STROM CATCH IF DEAL COULD BE WORKED OUT WHEREBY STROM COULD OBTAIN FISHING LICENSE. ARROYO REPLIED THAT DIRECTORATE OF FISHERIES, EPNA, AND NAVY HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH APPROVING LICENSE FOR BOAT OF OVER 600 NRT. SUCH A SECISION HAD TO BE MADE BY MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN CONSULTATION WITH CONSEJO NACIONAL DE DESARROLLO PESQUERO. HE NOTED THAT SUB-SECRETARY OF FISHERIES (WHO IS ACTING MINISTER) WILL MEET WITH CONSEJO IN GUAYAQUIL ON FEB 28 AND SUGGESTED THAT STROM LICENSE PETITION BE PLACED BEFORE THAT BODY. FOLLOWING MEETING, GLIGO INSTRUCTED ZAPATIER TO DRAFT SUCH A PETITION TO BE PRESENTED TOMORROW.

6. SOUSA SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO PURCHASE CATCH STILL ON BOARD JACQUELINE A. ARROYO REPLIED THAT THIS CAUSED NO PROBLEM AND THAT VESSEL WOULD PROCEED TO MANTA ON MARCH 3 IN ACCORDANCE WITH EARLIER AGREEMENT BETWEEN SOUSA AND CHACON.

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7. COMMENT: AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH CHACON AND RUIZ, ARROYO CANCELLED PREVIOUS ORDERS TO COMPANIES TO PURCHASE CATCH (GUAYAQUIL 325 AND 328) BY TEARING OFF HIS SIGNATURE AND LEAVING REPS WITH CONTENT SO THEY COULD ASK BOAT OWNERS FOR INSTRUCTIONS. TODAY'S MEETING WILL RESULT IN FINAL DECISION CONCERNING OFF-LOADING OR BUY-BACK FOR STROM AND NEPTUNE. ECUADOREAN AUTHORITIES REMAIN FACED WITH PROBLEM OF WHAT TO DO WITH FISH IF ALL IS OFF-LOADED. CHACON TOLD CONGEN MORNING OF

FEB 27 THAT HE HAD MORE FISH THAN HE COULD HANDLE. EMBOFF
WOLTMAN REPORTS THAT MANTA PRESS OF FEB 27 DESCRIBES MEETING
BETWEEN MANTA FISHERMEN AND ARROYO ON FEB 26 WHERE FORMER
COMPLAINED THAT CONFISCATED CATCH IS TAKING UP ALL AVAILABLE
STORAGE SPACE AND CAUSING LOCAL MARKET PRICE TO DROP.

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